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ADM-12.1
(Memo for Record)
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22 May 1968

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: OXCART Mothballing

1. In discussing the status of the OXCART situation with [] and the undersigned, the DDCI advised that Secretary Clifford's decision to proceed with the mothballing of the OXCART program has been concurred in by the President. (This is a reaffirmation of the original decision made by the President in December of 1966.) The decision was one which was based almost totally on budgetary considerations. It is generally considered that the United States should maintain a covert aerial reconnaissance capability and that this capability should rest with CIA. However, it has been decided that this is a capability which cannot be maintained under present budgetary considerations.

2. With respect to the OXCART versus the SR-71 program, the DDCI noted that the SR-71 was developed to meet the requirements of post-strike aerial reconnaissance in the event of a nuclear exchange; hence, the requirement for []. The OXCART, on the other hand, was designed for the specific purpose of obtaining high altitude photographic intelligence of denied areas on a "black" basis. There is no question but what the OXCART is more effective, overall, for its purpose. However, given the existence of the SR-71 program, the continuation of OXCART can not be justified in the present budgetary climate.

15/
[]
Assistant Legislative Counsel

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Approved For Release 2003/09/08 : CIA-RDP71B00529R000100070027-8

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